
SUPERFUND FACT SHEET

Arkwood, Inc.
Omaha, Arkansas

REMEDIAL INVESTIGATION

November 1986

INTRODUCTION

In September 1985, the Arkwood, Inc. site was added to the National Priorities List (NPL) of hazardous waste sites that pose a potential threat to public health and the environment. As an NPL site, it became eligible for federal cleanup funds provided under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, commonly called Superfund. NPL sites are investigated to determine the characteristics of the site including:

- Extent and severity of contamination in the soil, surface water, and groundwater
- Location of the contamination
- Appropriate solutions to the problem to reduce or eliminate the threat to public health and the environment
- Parties responsible for the contamination

This process is called a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS). The RI/FS phase is now beginning at the Arkwood site. This fact sheet is the first in a series that EPA will issue to inform the area residents about the activities, study findings, and opportunities for public involvement.

SITE DESCRIPTION

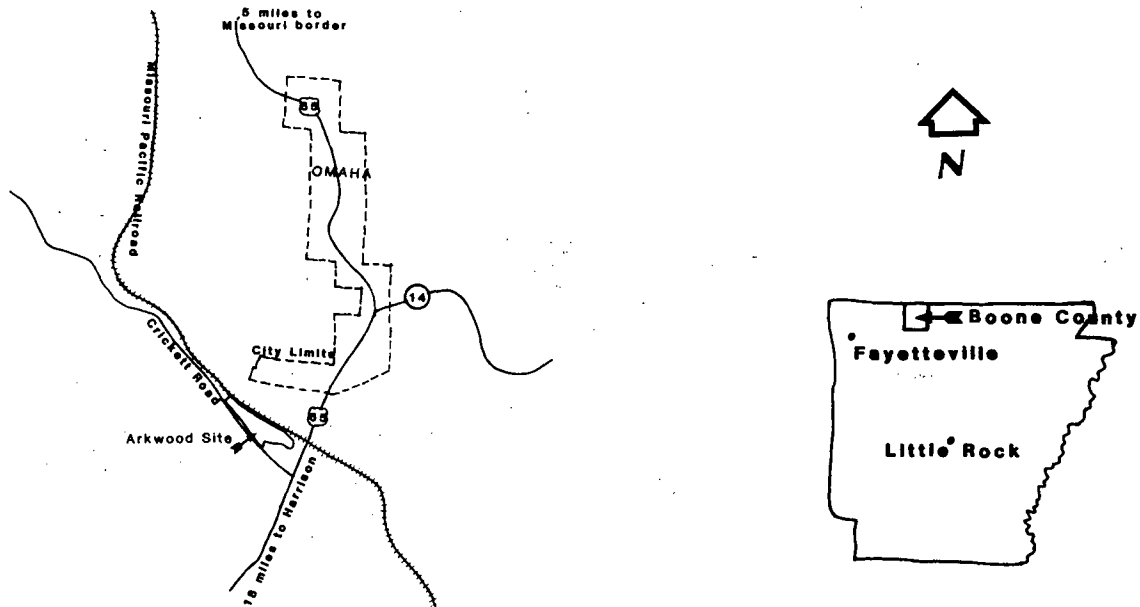
The Arkwood site covers approximately 20 acres on the Missouri-Pacific's Crickett Railroad siding, one-half mile southwest of Omaha in Boone County, Arkansas, see Figure 1. The site is located in an excavated area at the head of a valley approximately 1,000 feet west of U. S. Highway 65, north of Crickett Road.

The site consisted of a millwork shop, a wood treating plant which used pentachlorophenol (PCP) and creosote, and a storage yard for the treated wood products prior to sale. The majority of buildings and tanks at the site have recently been removed. There is also a large pile of sawdust and woodchips located in the southeast portion of the site.

9419354



Figure 1 Site Map



SITE BACKGROUND

The plant site was developed in the early 1900s when the railroad company excavated to a depth of 40-50 feet below natural grade to obtain fill dirt for the construction of the railroad embankment. The Arkwood plant was built and started operations at the site in the early 1960s. In 1973, the owner of Arkwood leased the treatment plant and the land to Mass Merchandisers, Inc. (MMI), of Harrison, Arkansas. The facility operated from 1973 until treatment operations ceased in June 1984, at which time MMI sold or removed the remaining inventory and process materials. In January 1985, the 12-year lease expired and was not renewed. The plant has not operated since that time.

According to MMI, wastes from the Arkwood wood treating operation were dumped into a cave at the treating plant from the beginning of the operation until 1970. The entrance to the cave, which is at ground level, was boarded and covered with a layer of dirt. Waste oils were also placed in a ditch adjacent to the railroad until approximately 1974, when the cost of the chemicals used in the treatment process forced the use of a recovery system and reduced the volume of wastes generated.

Other wastes consist, in part, of the liquid from washing of the treatment room floor and the equipment. These wastes accumulated in a tank and were then spread over the storage yard to control dust. Based on plant operations during 1970, it is estimated that a minimum of 6,000 to 7,000 pounds per year of waste were generated over the more than 20 years of operation.

Samples taken from the sawdust and woodchips pile indicated that a portion of this pile is contaminated with PCP. The Arkansas Department of Pollution Control and Ecology detected PCP in samples taken from local water wells, natural springs in the area, and nearby Walnut Creek. In 1982, MMI drilled replacement wells for two nearby residents and retained a consulting firm to conduct a geohydrological study in the area. Approximately 660 persons within a 3-mile radius of the site depend upon private wells for drinking water.

STATUS OF THE INVESTIGATION

An Administrative Order on Consent was signed in May 1986 authorizing MMI to conduct the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study under EPA oversight. A draft workplan was submitted by MMI to EPA in July 1986 and this document has been reviewed and is undergoing revision. The field investigations are expected to begin in the winter of 1986. The Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study process is scheduled for completion in 1988. At that time, EPA will hold a public meeting in Omaha to explain the results of the investigation and outline the possible solutions to the problem.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information about the Arkwood site, please call or write to:

Ellen D. Greeney
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1201 Elm Street (6H-SS)
Dallas, Texas 75270
(214) 767-9739